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REMARKS OF PAUL M. NITZE
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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS
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1. INTRODUCTION

From its earliest days I have believed that the Institute for Strategic Studies could do something which badly needed to be done and which, to my mind, could be done in no other way. It could provide a forum in which strategy could be discussed on a non-compartmentalized basis, where military strategy could be related to political strategy, armament policy related to arms control, U.K. strategy related to U.S. strategy, and both subsumed under NATO and general Western strategy. Furthermore, it could provide a forum where those out of office could discuss matters with the same seriousness as though they were in office, and those in office could enjoy some of the protection from direct quotation and some of the freedom of expression enjoyed by those out of office. The Institute has and is fulfilling this promise. It is with pleasure that I find myself with you this afternoon.

When Alastair Buchan first invited me to speak before your group, he gave as the reason that U.S. defense policy was unclear and not understood in Europe and that I might do something toward clarifying the intentions guiding United States policy. I replied that I thought the shoe was, rather, on the other foot, that the United States defense policy had been made reasonably clear both in word and in action. The questions which seemed to me to press more urgently for answers revolved about European defense policies including those of the United Kingdom. So my first response to Alastair was that I would much enjoy coming to a meeting of the Institute to listen to a discussion of the latter subject, rather than to speak myself to the former.

A number of circumstances, including an article in the Wall Street Journal, our leading financial publication, purporting to reflect current London views on NATO strategy, caused me to realize that the bases of U.S. policy apparently are not fully appreciated or understood by many people over here and that it would be worthwhile to exchange views with you on U.S. defense policy.

The point made by the Wall Street Journal article was that the idea of using conventional weapons to achieve a military pause was regarded in London as being dead and buried; that it had more holes than a piece of Swiss cheese; that it reflected weakness, was defeatist, and undermined the credibility of the deterrent. We in the U.S. agree that the word "pause" should be rejected because of its imprecision; it may connote non-action or have other unacceptable overtones. On the other hand, the notion of the desirability of an increase in the non-nuclear capability of the alliance, along with an expansion and improvement in its nuclear capabilities, in our view, is not only not dead, but is very live indeed. Increasing its non-nuclear capabilities is what the alliance has in fact been doing in connection with the Berlin crisis: with, I believe, positive results. This increase in our non-nuclear capabilities is not a reflection of weakness, it is not defeatist, and it has measurably increased the credibility of the deterrent. Furthermore, recent Soviet actions, although always somewhat ambiguous, are in our view consistent with this evaluation, not with that expressed in the Wall Street Journal article.

But I am getting ahead of myself. The nuclear-non-nuclear balance is obviously only one of a number of interrelated issues of Western defense strategy and policy. Let me therefore first say a few words about the evolution of defense policy in the Kennedy Administration.

Perhaps I should go back before January 20, 1961. During the eight years of Republican Administration, many of us in the Democratic Party, who were concerned with Defense issues, had the opportunity of long and extended discussion with some of you who are members of this Institute. Ideas have a multiplicity of sources

Most of ours undoubtedly come from our American associates. Some, I am sure, were plagiarized from Alastair Buchan, Admiral Buzzard, Liddell Hart, Richard Goold-Adams, Dennis Healey or Sir John Slessor. By way of reciprocity, "Survival" published the pamphlet which the Democratic Advisory Council put out on Defense policy a year ago last summer.

A shift of focus does take place, however, when a party assumes the responsibilities of office. As one of the first acts of his new Administration, President Kennedy directed a reappraisal of our Defense structure, including our strategic plans and the nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities of our forces. A part of that re-examination was undertaken by a group under the chairmanship of Dean Acheson. It included representatives of the State Department, the Defense Department, of whom one was Albert Wohlstetter, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the White House staff. It made a number of recommendations to the President. Among these was the overriding concern which the United States has for the security of Europe and for the strengthening of the NATO Alliance. From these recommendations stemmed President Kennedy's re-affirmation of our intention to maintain the full strength of our forces in Europe and to re-affirm the force of our commitments to Europe's security.

I might mention in this connection that it was our view that the NATO relationship had changed from the days of its creation in 1948. At that time the significant thing about the Alliance was the commitment of U.S. power to the support of Europe. In today's situation it seemed to us that the relationship is somewhat different, that it calls for a greater mutuality of interest. Today the commitment that each shall look upon an attack upon the other as an attack upon itself must have mutual force to be fully effective.

The immediate and operative decisions which had to be taken shortly after January 20th concerned money and men. Should the Eisenhower budget be increased and, if so, in what areas and to what purposes. At that time it was thought we could live within the then existing manpower ceilings, and no major change in those ceilings was then recommended. It was, however, decided that an increase in our Defense budget was required. On the one hand, there were urgent requirements to improve the security and the quality of the nuclear deterrent. On the other hand, it seemed necessary to raise substantially the level of our non-nuclear capabilities along with our nuclear capability.

In the nuclear field a number of steps were taken, many of which were made possible by technological developments undertaken by the previous administration.

The existing program for the construction of POLARIS submarines was accelerated and expanded. Improvements were made in the program for the solid fuel MINUTEMAN strategic missile system, and funds were added for the development of SKYBOLT. To protect our bomber forces from destruction in surprise attack we increased our ground and airborne alert capacities and undertook the installation of bomb alarm detectors and signals at key warning and communication points and at all SAC bases. We accelerated construction of our air defense and warning systems, and began a careful examination of the organizational and technical aspects of command and control of the strategic deterrent. The object of this program is to assure that the President will have the time and means personally to make the decision to use nuclear weapons, if that decision must be made, and to minimize any possibility of triggering nuclear war by accident or miscalculation.

In looking back to assess the progress we have made in this effort to improve the security and quality of the nuclear deterrent, I think we can honestly claim that very solid and real progress has already been made. The POLARIS program has probably received the highest priority. The accuracy, reliability and range of the system have been significantly improved. The production schedules have been accelerated to a point where we will be turning our POLARIS submarines at the rate of one a month beginning in January 1963. The construction delays in the ATLAS, TITAN and MINUTEMAN ground installation program have been eliminated. But what has been, perhaps, most significant for the short term future is that it has proved possible to bring 50% of our heavy bomber force to a 15 minute alert status.

There was always a certain degree of misunderstanding concerning the so-called missile gap. The question was not so much one of relative numbers but one of the potential vulnerability of our strategic deterrent. Much has and is being done to

reduce that vulnerability. Furthermore, it appears to be the consensus of the intelligence community, both in the United States and in the United Kingdom, that the Soviet deployment of ICBMs has proceeded less rapidly than it was once feared it might. There has never been any doubt that the West possesses by far the greater nuclear force, including delivery capability, than does the U.S.S.R. Now that the problems of vulnerability, dispersal and command and control have become manageable, we believe that this force, including the U.K. nuclear forces and the NATO forces deployed on the Continent, give the West a definite nuclear superiority. We further believe this superiority can be maintained into the future, as improved weapon systems are developed and deployed by both sides. Furthermore, we believe this superiority, particularly when viewed from the Soviet side, to be strategically important in the equations of deterrence and strategy.

The other half of the initial program directed by the President came under the heading of strengthening our ability to deter or confine limited aggression. The President selected three specific areas in which improvements would be undertaken: a higher priority for research, development and production of non-nuclear weapons; an increased flexibility of non-nuclear forces including air lift and sea lift capacity; and increased personnel and training for sub-limited warfare. The real impetus to the improvement of our non-nuclear capabilities in the NATO area came later, however, as a result of the more serious tension over Berlin.

Another aspect of the initial program was to contribute to an improvement in the consultative processes of NATO. Dean Rusk decided that the United States should take the lead in bringing before the NATO Council the full range of worldwide issues, not merely those impinging directly upon the Treaty area. At the Oslo Ministerial Meeting he devoted as much time to the issues of Latin America, principally Cuba; of Africa, principally the Congo and Angola; and of Asia, principally Laos and Vietnam, as he did to the purely European issues. He was somewhat disappointed, however, that most of the NATO ministers other than Lord Hume and Couve de Murville showed little interest in following up the discussion of these issues. An attempt was also made at the NATO Council to discuss basic issues of strategy. That attempt, however, seemed to us to be largely unproductive. In any case, it was shortly overtaken by the Berlin crisis.

In this connection I wish to go back to the points suggested by the Wall Street Journal article which I mentioned earlier. At that point I merely asserted that I disagreed with the implication that a buildup of NATO's non-nuclear forces was defeatist, divisive and undermined the credibility of the nuclear deterrent.

Let me first take up the last of those points: the effect of a non-nuclear buildup on the credibility of the nuclear deterrent.

We can ask ourselves the question, what it is that is likely to affect Mr. Khrushchev's judgment on whether aggressive courses of action on his part will be likely to bring him unacceptably close to the danger of nuclear war. I should think the most important persuader is to be found in Western nuclear capabilities, their survivability against anything his forces can do, their penetration capabilities against his defenses, their responsiveness to responsible control, and their accuracy numbers and power. On this score, as I have said earlier, the facts support a very credible deterrent indeed. I personally know of nothing significant which the alliance could do but isn't doing within the probable time frame of the Berlin crisis, to improve the capabilities part of the nuclear deterrent.

Another part of the deterrent is the indications Mr. Khrushchev and his advisors receive from Western words and actions as to Western determination to protect its vital interests. Mr. Kennedy and Lord Home, among others, have expressed to Mr. Khrushchev and to Mr. Gromyko Western determination to see vital Western interests in Berlin defended in clear and unambiguous terms. I doubt whether much would be gained if we were to adept to our purposes a much used Soviet tactic and dwell often and at length upon what would happen to Moscow or other Soviet areas if given numbers of thermo-nuclear weapons were to strike them. Mr. Khrushchev already knows the facts. [?]

What we are left with then are actions which can leave no doubt in the Soviet mind that we mean to follow a course of action, if they persist in their aggression, which will bring about a new situation in which the danger to them of nuclear war is very great indeed. Let us assume two different hypothetical situations.

In the first situation the central NATO front is very lightly covered. It is subject to the risk of deep penetration by Soviet non-nuclear forces starting from a standing start. The only option which the West has, to demonstrate its determination to have its vital interests respected, is to initiate the action with the use of nuclear weapons. In the second situation, the NATO front is firmly held on a continuous line. There are enough reserve forces to mount a really serious non-nuclear probe in the air corridors or along the autobahn. That probe can be thrown back by a full application of Soviet non-nuclear power, but only by involving Soviet and NATO forces in a major fight.

If you were sitting in the Kremlin, which situation would be consider most likely to bring you face to face with nuclear war if you persisted in a train of actions violating what the West considers to be its vital interests. To me, the answer is clear. If I were in the Kremlin I would be much more concerned in the second situation; I would consider it much more likely that the West would find it politically possible to initiate action in defense of the Berlin access routes from the second posture than from the first. During the last few months we have moved a long way from the first toward the second situation.

It is worth noting that the forces which would put us in the second situation have for years been a firm and agreed NATO requirement. On the crucial central front that requirement has been approximately 30 M-day divisions. Last year we had the equivalent of about 18 divisions, many not being up to standard. By the end of this month we will have 24 M-day divisions. These can be augmented, if the situation indicates the advisability of so doing, by six additional U.S. divisions now at or approaching combat readiness. Beyond that are 1st and 2nd echelon divisions.

It is not our view that, even in the longer run, would it be necessary and advisable to have more than 30 M-day divisions. We do believe however, that those we have should be excellently equipped and trained and that their logistic support should be in proper shape. We further believe that reserve forces should be augmented.

It is also important to bear in mind that Berlin is much more important to the West than it is to Moscow. Khrushchev now virtually admits as much. Today he emphasizes that his prestige is at stake. That he has taken positions which make it difficult to back down. He may in fact have a prestige problem and it is important that we leave him a way out. He set the deadlines and he has now postponed them. But at the root of the matter the fact remains that the continued freedom of Berlin is more important to the West than the suppression of that freedom is to him. It is important that we have the means of translating that fact into action which can bring home to him the full dangers he would face in going further and which would still not bring us to an irreversible situation.

Sometimes I wonder whether the opposition to the non-nuclear buildup does not arise from considerations just the opposite of those publicly advanced. If we buildup strength on the NATO front, may we not then be tempted to use that strength in defense of our interests. And then may the situation not get out of hand and degenerate into a nuclear war. That there are risks in bringing home to the Russians the fact that we propose to defend our interests is indubitable. But that they fall under the heading of defeatism undermining the credibility of the nuclear deterrent seems to me to be the sheerest nonsense.

The experience of the Alliance during this period of intense concentration on Berlin appears to me to have a significant bearing on a number of the organizational issues raised in Alastair Buchan's very thoughtful Adelphi paper. In that paper, Alastair refers to the desirability of concurrent discussion in NATO of political and military matters.

In the Berlin crisis this has in fact been found necessary and has in fact been done. The way in which it has been done has, however, been affected by the particular circumstances of Berlin. The U.K., France and the U.S. have special responsibilities as occupying powers for the security and viability of West Berlin and for access to it. The NATO Alliance as a whole has, in effect, underwritten those responsibilities by endorsing the determination of the three

occupying powers to defend those rights and by declaring any attack upon the forces of the three powers in Berlin, or engaged in maintaining access to Berlin, to be in effect a casus foederis. Germany, however, because of its historic relationship to Berlin, and because any defense of allied rights in Berlin must be mounted from German territory, has in this issue a special position among the non-tripartite NATO powers.

The result has been an organizational structure beginning with the three occupying powers, but with Germany included in virtually all tripartite organs and discussions. The tripartite organization has thus become for practical, as distinguished from theoretical purposes, a quadripartite one.

This quadripartite structure has evolved to address itself to the various aspects of the Berlin problem at various levels of seniority from Foreign Minister, down to relatively junior civil and military officers, and at various locations: Washington, Paris, Bonn, Berlin, London and even, although less formally, among the four Ambassadors at Moscow.

A principal problem has been that of relating this quadripartite organization to the NATO organization. The four permanent representatives to NATO have been kept continuously informed of what has gone on in the Washington Ambassadorial or other groups, and they in turn have kept Mr. Stikker and the other NAC Permanent Representatives briefed. But at times, Mr. Stikker and the Permanent NAC members have felt the initiative should be with them and not with the quadripartite groups. And at times, I think they have been right. On the other hand the pace of action among the 15 is generally slower than among the four.

But as long as the Alliance is an Alliance and not a Federation, it has to progress on a somewhat pragmatic basis. We have seen that one country can block action that the others would think wise, whether the forum is composed of four countries or of fifteen, whether there has been the fullest and frankest prior discussion and staff work, and even though military and political issues have been discussed together and in full candor. The country blocking action has not always been the same country; it has depended upon the country and the special interests or issues involved.

As a crisis, Berlin has engaged our energies more than full time for many months. Inevitably much of our attention has had to be focused on a very short short run; on the immediate moves and counter-moves of the crisis. However, we did not come to that crisis without long range goals; and the results of allied efforts are, I believe, significant for the long, as well as the short haul.

The most obvious short run accomplishment is that Mr. Khrushchev has had to change his tune a bit. He set a deadline for 1961. The pressure he has put upon the Alliance has been well prepared, massive and aggressively applied. The fact that he had put off previous ultimatums made this one harder to postpone. Yet he did. And this is something. The Alliance has not split apart under the pressure. We have not given in, and he has not, at least as yet, forced a fight.

Mr. Khrushchev's change of pace may be traced on the fact that in this short run we have strengthened the Alliance's ability to deter both nuclear and non-nuclear war and to fight in case deterrence fails. Most important, these allied moves have shown a will to resist his threats which Mr. Khrushchev may not have suspected.

We continue to be ready to negotiate with Mr. Khrushchev and the alternatives to negotiation must look less attractive to him now than they did in June. We have, for example, increased NATO's vital center. Some divisions that were under-strength are now combat ready — new divisions have been added — both equipment and manning have improved greatly. The Alliance will have increased its force by some 370,000 men. Naturally the allies have not contributed equally. But the European members of NATO will have themselves added about 100,000 men. The large contribution by the U.S. is one of many ways in which we have reaffirmed our commitment to the defense of Europe. The significance of this is not lost on Mr. Khrushchev.

For these short run changes have a long run significance. Speeded by Mr. Khrushchev's prodding, we have taken a big stride toward goals that in the spring we had been approaching more slowly. Redressing the balance between nuclear and non-nuclear forces is no longer an academic issue. One need not debate the possibility of larger Defense budgets. Our own budget has increased by a fourth. The adequacy of allied strategic forces to deter attack on Europe and the U.S. is more clearly visible than ever.

These have all been major steps toward long run goals of the allies. Finally the very process of consultation by means of which these policies have been hammered out have a long run significance.

There has been a great deal of discussion about the problem of increasing the European role in NATO. I feel strongly that this must be done. Moreover, I feel that in the past year public as well as private discussions have clarified the direction in which we should go. Here again, the members of this Institute have played a most useful role. The terms of the debate here and elsewhere have been defined more sharply. It is clear now that earlier talk about the sharing of "control" tended to focus on a false issue - on a set of knotty and possibly insoluble problems - the balancing of 15 fingers on a button. Or was it a safety catch? The analogy between the famous medieval angels and the head of a pin was all too apparent.

Of all things last minute command is least divisible. But the formulation of policy for the contingencies in which a button might be pressed, the elaboration of force structures and strategies for operation and negotiation will determine what choices can be made not only in the last minute but must be made well before. It is here that a broader, more effective, and more responsible participation by the partners of NATO need to be expanded. And the Berlin consultations seem to me to have been a proto-type and testing ground for such candid, full and detailed exchanges.

Earlier debate on NATO strike force seems to me to have been, on the whole, muddled by a failure to understand the distinction which Alastair has formulated so usefully as the between "control" in the sense of the command decision and the pressing of a lever or a button, and "control", in the sense of access to planning and policy decisions.

A clear-headed shift in emphasis toward the sharing of "control" seems to me to be the order of the day.

This is the direction in which I think the Alliance could fruitfully go. The Alliance is not a fixed but a changing thing. Both its organizational forms and their content will alter.

I have come with no organization charts. I have no elaborate recipes for the NATO cook-shop of the future. However, there are several ingredients I would like to see in the mixture. The one I think most important for the future of the United States and Europe is that NATO, in its development, try to find - not some neat substitute for the American commitment to Europe - but a form of collaboration between us which will be increasingly frank, intimate, continuous and complete.